



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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SECNAVINST 5420.169K  
ASN (M&RA)  
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SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5420.169K

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY RETIRED ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5200.35F  
(b) SECNAV M-5214.1

Encl: (1) Responsibilities

1. Purpose. To revise this instruction to clarify the scope, responsibilities and procedures for the conduct of the Department of the Navy's Retired Activities Program. This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 5420.169J.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), and all U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps installations, commands, activities, field offices, and all other organizational entities within the DON.

4. Policy. Retired Navy and Marine Corps personnel are individuals with a continuing military status. They, as well as their family members and survivors, are entitled to certain rights, benefits, and privileges, and are subject to responsibilities arising from these entitlements. Retirees are also subject to recall to active duty at the discretion of the President. In discharging these responsibilities, retirees, as part of the Total Force, are capable of making meaningful contributions to the missions of the Department of the Navy (DON). Therefore, their continuing participation as Navy-Marine Corps team members is encouraged and supported. In order for retirees to make an effective contribution, they should be kept informed of changing programs and policies. The DON's Retired Activities Program provides an avenue to ensure the relationships between retirees and the Navy and Marine Corps are reinforced and mutually beneficial.

5. Responsibilities. See enclosure (1).

6. Internal Controls. In accordance with reference (a), the establishment and use of internal controls and accounting procedures are mandated to ensure: effectiveness and efficiency of operations; reliability of financial reporting; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Additionally, as part of the annual Manager's Internal Control Program report, the Navy and Marine Corps will provide the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASN (M&RA)) with copies of the sections of their reports that are relevant to this program.

7. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned according to the records disposition schedules found on the Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page:  
<https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/SitePages/Home.aspx>

8. Reports. The reporting requirement contained in paragraph 6 is exempt from information collections control per Part IV, paragraph 7n of reference (b). The reporting requirement contained in enclosure (1), paragraph 1a(3)(e) is exempt from information collections control per Part IV, paragraph 7k of reference (b).



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<https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni>.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Concept. The Retired Activities Program consists of four principal elements: Navy and Marine Corps Retiree Council (the Council); Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days; Retired Activities Offices (RAOs)/Retired Liaison Offices (RLOs); and Shift Colors newsletter for Navy Retirees and Semper Fidelis newsletter for Retired Marines. The responsibilities associated with these elements and offices are as follows:

a. Navy and Marine Corps Retiree Council. The Council is established to consider issues of significant importance to retired military personnel and their family members, to facilitate interaction between DON leadership and the Navy-Marine Corps retired community, and to facilitate participation in other aspects of the Retired Activities Program. In accomplishing these objectives, the Council may review the effectiveness of current programs and policies affecting retirees and make recommendations concerning improvements to benefits, privileges, assistance, quality of life, morale, and any other matters relating to retired personnel. Members are strongly encouraged to make themselves available to assist host installations located in their geographic area in the planning and execution of annual Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days as described in paragraph 4b. They are also encouraged to volunteer at local RAOs and RLOs. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Military Manpower & Personnel (DASN (MM&P)) will serve as the Executive Director of the Council.

### (1) Composition

(a) The Navy and Marine Corps Retiree Council will be composed of between 12 and 24 military members including, to the greatest possible extent, both retired enlisted and officers, Sailors and Marines, and retirees living both inside and outside the United States. From this membership, one will serve as Chief of Staff, one as Recorder, and two will serve as Co-Chairs. When possible, one Co-Chair will be a retired flag officer or general officer and the other Co-Chair will be a retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy or Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, or a retired E-9 who, while on active duty, filled a billet as a Master Chief or Sergeant Major that dealt with personnel and/or manpower issues at the Headquarters level. At all times, one Co-Chair will represent the Navy, while the

other represents the Marine Corps. Co-Chairs serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director and are generally appointed for terms of three consecutive calendar years.

(b) The Council should reflect, to the greatest possible extent, the breadth of the retired community. The Council should not only include representatives from regular retired, fleet reserve, and reserve retired personnel from the Navy and Marine Corps, but should also reflect the retired community's overall diversity. The Council would also benefit from including one or more retirees receiving Department of Veterans Affairs disability pay and personnel from communities of special interest such as medical, legal, and wounded, ill, and injured.

(c) Council members serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director and are subject to annual re-appointment. Member terms of service will generally not exceed three consecutive calendar years, but may be extended pending the Co-Chairs' recommendation and the Executive Director's approval. Co-Chair terms may also be extended by the Executive Director.

## (2) Vacancies and Appointments

(a) Annually, the Co-Chairs and the Executive Director will review the membership to determine vacancies anticipated for the following year. DASN (MM&P) will solicit for new volunteers from the Navy and Marine Corps. Each Service will solicit and screen applications from the military retired community and make recommendations to the Co-Chairs. DASN (MM&P) makes the final selections and Council appointments with Co-Chair concurrence. As general guidelines, the following criteria will be used:

(1) Active involvement in a volunteer capacity with the national or local retiree community (especially in an RAO, RLO, or local retiree council);

(2) Subject-matter expertise in areas of concern to the retired community (e.g., medical, compensation, legal, and community outreach/resources);

(3) Location to ensure as many areas of the United States and overseas regions are represented as possible;

(4) Retirement date to ensure the Council includes retirees of various eras;

(5) Willingness and ability to travel within their geographic area and to other locations as necessary; and

(6) Demonstrated skills in the use of computer technology for research and communication.

(7) Diversity of gender and enlisted and officer retiree status in order to ensure the Council includes members with different perspectives and ideas.

(b) Retirees selected for membership will be notified by appointment letter signed by the Executive Director. The names of the Council members will be published in Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis before or during the year in which they begin service. Nominees who are not selected will be notified formally by OPNAV (N170C) and Headquarters Marine Corps Retired Services and Pay Section (MMSR-6).

(3) Administration

(a) DASN (MM&P) will serve as the Executive Director of the Navy and Marine Corps Retiree Council and provide necessary coordination, guidance, and administrative support.

(b) DASN (MM&P) will periodically convene the Council for meetings either in person or through alternate means, such as a tele-conference or video-conference;

(c) The Council Co-Chairs will establish the procedure for meetings and may appoint an Executive and/or other committees as necessary;

(d) Council meetings will normally be convened in the National Capital Region annually. Members will be issued active duty orders and any members attending in person will be issued Defense Travel System (DTS) travel orders by their respective Services. Accepting active duty orders and DTS travel orders is voluntary; however, refusal or inability to accept such orders can preclude further service as a Council member;

(e) The Council will submit a report to the Secretary of the Navy at the conclusion of the annual meeting. The Council may submit additional reports when necessary to accomplish its objectives. An example would be separate reports to the CNO and the CMC addressing items not requiring legislative action or policy changes at the Departmental level.

b. Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days. To ensure wide dissemination of information and policies of concern to the retired Navy and Marine Corps communities, the CNO and CMC will ensure that Retiree Seminars are conducted in locations where there are substantial numbers of military retirees living or near a Navy or Marine Corps installation.

(1) Members of the Council are strongly encouraged to participate in Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Day events held within their geographic area and at other locations when feasible. Council members may provide assistance in planning events and be included on the agenda as a presenter or guest speaker.

(2) When a Council member is not available in a geographical area and funding is not available, host commands may request funding from OPNAV (N17) or MMSR-6 for such assistance. Such costs may include travel and per diem for members who are invited to participate as speakers.

c. RAOs/RLOs. RAOs/RLOs serve as a link between local retirees and the serving military community as well as other governmental agencies that provide assistance to retirees. RAOs are located on Navy and Marine Corps installations and are staffed, in most cases, by volunteer retirees who help other retirees, family members, or survivors directly, or guide them to organizations to ensure they receive services and benefits to which they may be entitled. RLOs may be established at major medical treatment facilities (MTFs) to provide general and referral information on retiree benefits. RAO and RLO volunteers must agree in writing, to serve without compensation. Navy and Marine Corps will issue guidelines regarding the operation of RAOs and RLOS and periodically publish office listings in Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis.

(1) Support of Independent Retired Activities Efforts. Interested retirees in areas of the U.S. or foreign countries

which are geographically isolated from Navy and Marine Corps commands or installations and have a sizeable retired population may organize Independent Retired Activities Coordination Offices (IRACOs). RAOs and IRACOs share a similar mission and operate in a similar manner. However, due to conditions of isolation and special circumstances, the duties, responsibilities and activities of these independent groups may vary. Selection of activities to be pursued and any fund-raising to support those activities will be the full responsibility of the membership. The DON will neither endorse nor monitor the activities of these groups, nor provide direct operational support, funding, training, or oversight, but will provide the same general types of support offered to other individual retirees and patriotic organizations upon request. Individuals who perform or benefit from independent retiree assistance functions may use the Council as a conduit for presentation of their policy-related concerns for consideration by the Secretary.

(2) Retiree Newsletters (Shift Colors/Semper Fidelis). The Navy and Marine Corps will publish or provide electronically periodic newsletters to inform the retiree community about privileges, benefits, entitlements, and changes in laws and regulations that affect them. The newsletters will be made available online and accessible to all retirees, survivors and grey area reservists (in retired status but not eligible for retired pay because of age).

d. Coordination with other Services' Retiree Council Meetings. A goal of the Council is to form a strong, dynamic relationship amongst all Services in order to increase unification in addressing issues and action requests for changes to retiree policy. Coordination with other Service Retiree Councils is an important tool in networking and collaboration of ideas and issues that affect the entire Department of Defense. Navy and Marine Corps representation at other Services' Retiree Council meetings is encouraged, and can be accomplished via Defense Collaboration Services, telephone conferences and email.

## 2. Action

a. DASN (MM&P) will:

(1) Provide the appropriate level of personnel and logistical support for the planning and execution of the Council meetings.

(2) Ensure the composition of the Council and current member status is verified and accurate.

(3) Ensure that board extensions that are approved by the Chairs are valid.

b. The CNO and CMC will ensure that their Services' Headquarters:

(1) Solicit applications to fill vacant positions on the Navy and Marine Corps Retiree Council, and notify non-selected applicants and encourage them to resubmit for future Council vacancies;

(2) Provide the appropriate level of personnel, funding, and logistical support for the planning and execution of the annual Council meeting in Washington, DC, upon request by the Council Executive Director;

(3) Establish RAOs at Navy and Marine Corps installations with 1,000 or more Navy and Marine Corps retirees residing in a 100-mile radius, taking into consideration the existence of RAOs from other Services and the level of service provided. This does not prevent establishing RAOs with smaller retiree population where there is significant retired volunteers and interest;

(4) Establish RLOs at major MTFs, upon request and when feasible;

(5) Assist individuals performing IRACO functions by providing available information, handbooks, guides, forms, and publications, upon request;

(6) Ensure that Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days are conducted annually within appropriate demographic areas, and ensure timely notification and publicity are accomplished by listing locations and dates in appropriate editions of Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis;



(7) Issue specific information and guidance on the operations of RAOs/RLOs to include formalized training if necessary;

(8) Publish and ensure distribution of the official retiree newsletter to all retirees and annuitants (Shift Colors for the Navy and Semper Fidelis for the Marine Corps);

(9) Provide point of contact information of Council members to retirees wishing to submit input to the annual Council meeting or to solicit for participation in local retiree events.

c. Commander, Navy Installation Command/Marine Corps Regions and overseas DON installations are responsible for ensuring that local area commanders are provided with administrative, budgetary, financial and logistics support for RAOs/RLOs within their regions of responsibility and for ensuring funding is available to support Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days.

d. The success of the Retired Activities Program will depend not only on those directly involved, but also upon those in responsible positions whose sphere of influence includes the retiree community. Those in such positions of responsibility and leadership are expected to lend their personal attention and support to the program.